

Answer: Under existing law (Section 209(g) of the Highway Revenue Act of 1956) the TOPICS program as recommended for financing from the Highway Trust Fund would take priority over the Interstate System program if Highway Trust Fund revenues were inadequate to finance all programs at the authorized levels.

(b) Was this fact taken into account when it was decided to not limit the program to streets and highways on the Federal-aid system?

Answer: The TOPICS funds would be expended only on Federal-aid system routes. TOPICS-type improvements on streets and highways comprising the Federal-aid system are urgently needed to expedite traffic in urban areas, and this was the major consideration in submitting recommendations for the TOPICS program.

(c) Under these circumstances, I would like to have your views as to the desirability of making the authorizations for the new traffic operation projects program and the provision for financing forest highways and public lands highways out or the Highway Trust Fund conditional upon enactment of legislation providing revenues for the Highway Trust Fund in excess of that required to complete the Interstate System.

Answer: The Administration proposal for the continuing highway program is for a complete package involving completion of the Interstate System, continuation of the ABC program, authorization of a TOPICS program, and continuation of the Forest Highway and Public Lands Highway programs, all to be financed from revenues accruing to the Trust Fund under present and proposed legislation. No priority other than as prescribed by Section 209(g) of the Highway Revenue Act of 1956 has been established for one program over another—all are needed, and it is recommended that all be financed from the Trust Fund.

Revenues accruing to the Trust Fund under present legislation would be adequate to finance all of the programs at recommended levels for a period of several years in the future. The programs are needed now, and the necessary authorizations should not be conditioned upon enactment now of legislation to provide revenues for the Highway Trust Fund in excess of that required at a later date to complete the Interstate System. The Interstate System itself cannot be completed except as there is legislation to provide additional revenues in the Highway Trust Fund.

Section 6—Authorizations for State and community highway safety programs

1. Even if appropriation of money for this program is authorized by the Congress, the funds cannot be apportioned to the States. The apportionment formula set forth in the existing law does not apply to fiscal years after 1969. The Secretary is required to submit recommendations to the Congress by January 1, 1969 regarding a non-discretionary apportionment formula, and until this is done and the Congress acts, the funds cannot be apportioned.

Is there any reason why we should not defer authorization of funds for this program until the Congress considers the recommendation of the Secretary regarding the apportionment formula?

Answer: Public Law 89-564, the Highway Safety Act of 1966, requires the Secretary of Transportation to report to the Congress his recommendations for a nondiscretionary apportionment formula for State highway safety programs on or before January 1, 1969, and this will be done. The Department currently is studying various formulas which could be used for apportionment of authorizations for fiscal year 1970 and thereafter.

Authorizations are needed well in advance of usage so that the States may comply with Section 105, Chapter I, Title 23, U.S.C.—Highways, by submitting a program or programs of proposed projects for the utilization of funds. Enactment of the fiscal year 1970 and 1971 authorizations this year will permit the States the latitude they need for advance planning.

Section 7—Authorization for highway safety, research and development programs

1. I notice that section 7 would authorize \$30 million for fiscal year 1970 and \$40 million for fiscal year 1971 for highway safety, research and development programs. This compares with \$20 million and \$25 million authorized for fiscal years 1968 and 1969 respectively.

(a) Why does the Administration ask for an increase in this research program while many of the other aspects of the highway program are to be reduced?

Answer: The answer to this question must first speak to the thesis that the other aspects of the highway safety program are in fact not being reduced. If